



Please enter this Preliminary Amendment so that Applicants can re-write claims 3-6 in more conventional U.S. claim format and add claims directed to additional embodiments.

Information Disclosure Statement

The Applicants request the Examiner to conduct an independent, careful review of the attached EPO Search Report and documents, and confirm such review by returning an initialed and dated PTO-1449 form in accordance with MPEP 609.

Conclusion

The application is considered in good and proper form for allowance, and the Examiner is respectfully requested to pass this application to issue. If, in the opinion of the Examiner, a telephone conference would expedite the prosecution of the subject application, the Examiner is invited to call the undersigned attorney.

Respectfully submitted,

FITCH, EVEN, TABIN & FLANNERY

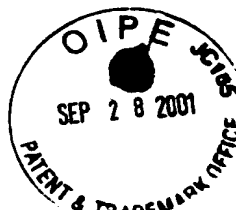
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In re Appln. of FITZ et al.
Application No. 09/899,825



CLAIMS AS AMENDED IN THE PRELIMINARY

Claims 3-6 are cancelled.

New claims 7-19 are added.